



For Immediate Release
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Seat Pleasant Police Department Highlights Youth Mentoring Programs

The Seat Pleasant Police Activities League (SP-P.A.L.) program was established to foster relationships between police, area youth, and our community. Throughout the year, the SP-PAL offers a variety of structured recreational sports, mentorships, academic enrichment workshops, youth empowerment classes, and fun activities designed to teach important life skills, build character and instill positive values. Many participants benefit from elevated physical fitness, greater self-esteem, improved social skills, and stronger regard for police officers. The SP-PAL assists our city youth in developing character, integrity, and leadership skills, as well as respect for themselves and others.



SP-PAL began in the summer of 2018 and hosted its first summer sports camp in partnership with Seat Pleasant Elementary School and the department's Community Policing Unit. Officer Melvin Brown, who is the SP-PAL coordinator stated, "what began with a group of 24 children has grown into a core program of the Seat Pleasant Police Department, serving over 200 children, pre-teens, and students of Seat Pleasant Elementary School weekly. Additionally, we are proud to be the 2019 flag football Division II Champions". Chief Devan A. Martin stated, "I am excited about our efforts to continually engage, educate, and empower our youth. As a child

growing up in this community, I benefited immensely from community mentoring programs. Programs similar to SP-PAL are responsible for my success today as a community leader".

According to statistics from the U.S. Justice Department, Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency, in 2018 over 700,000 juveniles were arrested for offenses nationally. National research studies overwhelmingly support early intervention models and social engagement programs which reduce the "school to prison pipeline" and recidivism among juvenile offenders. Mayor Eugene W. Grant stated, "as the Founder and President of a Youth Development organization for over 30 years, I am impressed with the efforts of Chief Martin and the entire department. Their commitment to service goes beyond the badge and outside the uniform. Witnessing our officers playing sports, tutoring youth, intervening on issues bullying, and imparting life skills is amazing".



Chief Martin highlighted, "While members of the department are engaged in SP-PAL, the officers take off their badges and become mentors to the youth. We are here to develop relationships and create a positive impact". If you are interested in finding out more information on SP-PAL, the department invites you to visit the city website at www.seatpleasantmd.gov. Some of SP-PAL programs include, SP-PAL Hangouts, SP-PAL Summer Camp & Lego Week, SP-PAL Athletics, and SP-PAL D.A.R.E. (Drop Everything and Read). Mentoring programs are free engagement initiatives for the community serving youth between the ages of 7 and 17.